

6 February 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR: [REDACTED]

SUBJECT: Right-wing Attacks against the United States National Student Association

Historical Background.

1. Since the United States National Student Association (USNSA) was founded and established itself as a permanent entity in the American educational scene, it has become the object of attacks from organizations and individuals with political positions of right-wing tendency. In its early days USNSA formulated a strong and unequivocal position on the issue of civil rights and was attacked by segregationist institutions like the White Citizens Councils and by Southern student leaders of segregationist persuasion. A number of Southern educational institutions disaffiliated from USNSA because of its position on civil rights, particularly when USNSA gave its wholehearted support to the Supreme Court decision of 1954.

2. Fraternities and sororities launched a strong attack on USNSA when the latter adopted a basic policy declaration entitled "Model Educational Practices Standards" (MEPS) which included a statement that called for deleting discriminatory clauses from fraternity and sorority constitutions. MEPS also supported the policy adopted by several Northern institutions calling for a fixed date by which time the national fraternities would have to remove their discriminatory clauses or face expulsion of their local chapters from the campus. The fraternity and sorority campaign against USNSA was launched on the platforms of their national conventions, in their magazines, and in the directives set forth by national fraternity and sorority officers to guide their local chapters. Particularly active was the National Pan-Hellenic Council, whose officers persuaded sorority officials to carry on the anti-USNSA campaign and who consistently refused ever to meet with USNSA officials to discuss the program and policies of the Association. The fraternity and sorority campaign had maximum effect on those campuses which contained a large number of fraternities and sororities.

3. In the McCarthy era, an organization called Students for America devoted a great amount of time to attacking USNSA and to persuading USNSA member schools to disaffiliate themselves from the organization. They charged that USNSA was controlled by leftists and liberals,

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489

was soft on communism, and adopted much of the "communist line" in its resolutions. Students for America was well-financed and carried its message through a series of journals and speakers who traveled to campuses throughout the country. Students for America was largely unsuccessful in persuading USNSA member schools to disaffiliate.

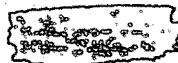
4. Historically the right-wing attacks against USNSA have been largely ineffective. At least, several schools have been persuaded to disaffiliate and others induced not to join. The right-wing attacks have been a minor irritation to USNSA officials but have assumed a low priority on the list of problems facing the Association.

Current Conservative Activity.

5. In the past two or three years conservative activity has increased substantially. The public has been alerted to the existence of the John Birch Society supported by a number of prominent named citizens. Barry Goldwater has risen into a position of prominence in the Republican Party and has gained enthusiastic support in the business community and among conservative students. Goldwater has become the leading hero of the American conservative movement and the rallying point for conservative-minded individuals. Inspired on by Goldwater, new conservative journals have sprung up, conservative organizations have been founded, and a nationwide effort has been made to gain adherents to the cause of Conservatism.

6. There are many explanations for the increase in conservative activity. The primary reason, I suspect, is the fear among the American public of the communist threat--externally from Soviet Russia and internally through agents of the Communist Party of the U.S.--and the seeming inability of the American public to cope with these dangers. The conservative philosophy offers complete answers to these complex problems. They suggest a series of pat solutions to problems which fail to meet the test of realistic applicability to the modern world but which are simple and easily understood. Among segments of the American public which have difficulty understanding domestic economic, or international political questions, conservative solutions have a great deal of resonance.

7. College students have recently been made the object of a great deal of attention by the leaders of the conservative movement. Senator Goldwater has traveled to several hundreds of universities and colleges during the last three years addressing student audiences and urging them to join in the "conservative revival." It is estimated that Goldwater speaks to at least one student audience each week. The conservatives have established several new journals strictly designed for propagandizing among college students and have utilized traditionally conser-



various publications to direct their attention toward the college student audience. Even longtime columnists such as David Lawrence, George Scholten, and Fulton Lewis, Jr., have devoted their columns to college student issues.

9. In September, 1961, a new conservative youth organization was formed at the Sharon, Conn., estate of Mr. William F. Buckley, editor of the National Review and well-known spokesman for the conservative movement. The Sharon conference formed Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) and announced that it would propagate the conservative faith among all American youth but with particular attention to college students. The statement of purpose of YAF included a denunciation of USNSA as dominated and controlled by an isolated liberal elite, and that YAF would attempt to convert USNSA to a conservative position or destroy it if the conversion were unsuccessful.

Recent Attacks on USNSA.

9. During the year 1960-61 YAF launched an extensive program aimed at discrediting USNSA among its member schools and the general public. Fulton Lewis III, 25-year old son of Fulton Lewis, Jr., and a former employee of the House Committee on Un-American Activities, traveled to over 100 campuses narrating the film "Operation Abolition," a dramatization of the San Francisco student demonstration against the HUKA. Lewis used this podium to include a series of attacks on the USNSA, in particular citing its position calling for reform of the HUKA as an illustration of leftist control of the organization. (Note: The Young Adult Council (YAC) came in for an attack as well. William Buckley utilized the columns of the National Review to attack a briefing given to members of the Young Adult Council delegation to the World Assembly of Youth council meeting in Accra, Ghana. Buckley charged that several of the State Department and AFI officials who briefed the delegation were former communists and questioned whether government funds were being improperly utilized.)

10. YAF established a series of front groups of their own in an attempt to discredit USNSA. The first group they formed called itself "The Committee for a Responsible National Student Organization" (CRNSO). Its director, Howard Phillips, coincidentally, was a vice president of YAF and the CRNSO address was also that of the YAF. The second group called itself "Students Committed to an Accurate National Representation" (SCAAR). Its director was a Northwestern coed named Kay Wonderlich. She operated SCAAR out of her home but apparently cooperated covertly with YAF. CRNSO took the position that students ought to be politically

- 1 -

active but that USNSA was controlled by an isolated elite of liberals and leftists and had no conservative representation in its officer or policies. SCAMR charged that students by and large were not interested in political questions and that NSA by taking positions on political issues was misrepresenting the American student body. In addition, SCAMR charged that USNSA consistently abused its constitution and refused to follow true democratic procedures at its meetings.

11. The work of SCAMR and SCAMR during the academic year 1960-61 was largely unsuccessful but, as they indicated in a multitude of mailings to U.S. campuses, they intended to stage a major fight at the USNSA Congress in August 1961.

12. In a series of press conferences and press releases during the summer of 1961, SCAMR and SCAMR predicted their success at the USNSA Congress and estimated their voting strength in the hundreds. Upon arrival early in the USNSA Congress it became apparent that the strength of the conservatives was small. Only 50-70 delegates out of 750 could be counted upon as hard-line supporters of the conservative position. Nonetheless, through a large expenditure of money and considerable organizational talent this small minority was able to create a considerable number of problems for USNSA officials and for delegates to the Congress. They attempted to amend the agenda to allow William Buckley to address the Congress. They introduced a resolution condemning the Castro regime early in the Congress before any consideration had been given to the International Affairs Commission by raising the issue of the imprisonment and imminent execution of Alberto Kuller. They used dilatory parliamentary tactics to disrupt the plenary sessions in an attempt to prevent business from being conducted at the plenary session. They attempted to make a last-minute deal with some of the past USNSA officers to water down the Cuban and HUAC resolutions in exchange for YAF support of a slate of candidates for USNSA officers.

13. YAF was unsuccessful in its attempts to influence the USNSA Congress. Their dilatory tactics were exposed and the myth of widespread support among delegates to the USNSA Congress for conservatism was exposed in the columns of reporters from some of the leading newspapers and magazines which covered the USNSA Congress, including the New York Times and representatives of AP and UPI.

Attacks on USNSA 1961-62.

14. With the crushing defeat of YAF at the USNSA Congress, [redacted] felt that right-wing efforts against USNSA would cease to be important. Since the summer, however, the conservative efforts to attack [redacted]

USNSA have increased. Through a concerted campaign of slandering USNSA programs, policies, and even personnel, the disaffiliations of the Universities of Oklahoma, Kansas, and WYU have been secured by the right wing. American University and Denver University, which contemplated joining USNSA, decided not to join after receiving considerable conservative literature. In a leaflet distributed to every Denver University student, the students were warned of internal communist subversion and advised that the first step in fighting the communist menace would be to refuse to join USNSA. Such action, according to the pamphlet, would prevent "the entire Denver University from becoming communist dupes."

15. M. Stanton Evans, editor of the Indianapolis News, another young conservative spokesman who recently received one of the Junior Chamber of Commerce awards, devoted an entire chapter to attacking USNSA in his recent book Revolt on the Campus. Fulton Lewis, Jr., turned over his weekly radio show to his son, Fulton Lewis III, who devoted three programs to attacking USNSA. Despite Howard Phillips' academic difficulties and Ray Wenderlich's graduation, and the embarrassing losses suffered at the USNSA Congress, WAF and their affiliated organizations continue to exist and to vehemently attack the National Student Association.

USNSA Response to Attacks.

16. What has traditionally been a minor irritation for the USNSA has now developed into a major headache. The right wing is working for disaffiliations at the Universities of Texas, Missouri, and Michigan. WAF's chances for success are good at Texas and Missouri. The disaffiliation of Texas would mean the loss of a traditionally strong student government which has produced several individuals who were elected to high office in USNSA.

The disaffiliations at Texas and Missouri would tend to bring into question USNSA's claim to represent American students and could seriously damage the USNSA's financial picture.

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